

OBITUARIES

W. S. MILLARD

(Plate)

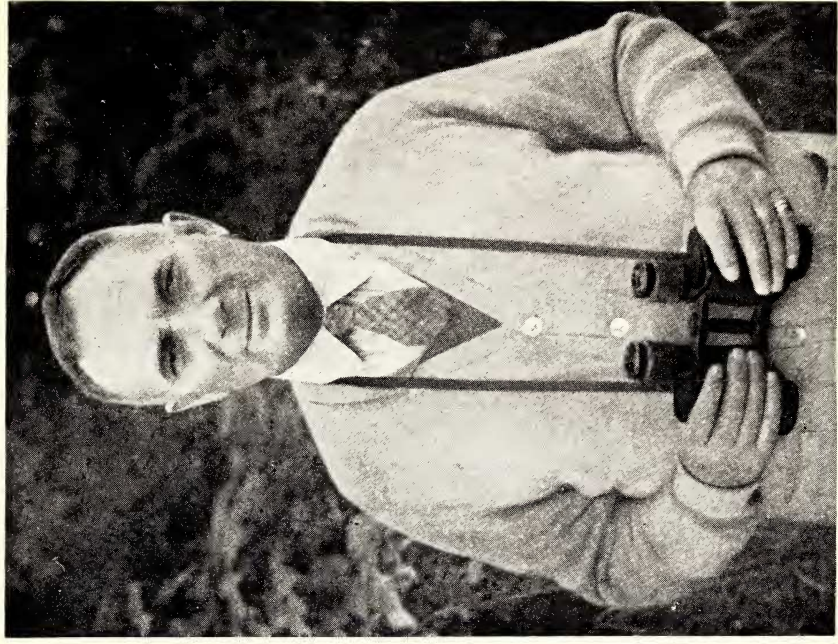
By the death of W. S. Millard at Tunbridge Wells on March 24 the Society has lost not only its oldest member, but the last link with the original founders.

Walter Samuel Millard, the seventh son of the Rev. J. H. Millard was born at Hungtingdon in 1864. After working for some time with Messrs. Frank Bailey & Co., wine importers in London he went to Bombay in 1884 as assistant to Herbert Phipson, who some years previously had started a wine business in that city. Phipson was a very remarkable man with a great interest in natural history, and though not one of the original founders, had been the mainstay of the Society from its beginning. Since 1886 he had held the offices of Honorary Secretary and editor of the *Journal*, and moreover had accommodated the Society in his original office in Forbes Street. But by the time Millard arrived he had moved to more commodious quarters at 6 (now 114), Apollo Street, the residence in former times of the Chief Justice of Bombay, and rented to the Society several rooms. It was impossible to work with Phipson without becoming interested in natural history. To reach his office it was necessary to pass through the Society's museum which, in addition to various stuffed animals and jars containing fish and reptiles, generally housed a live cobra or two and a large python. Not long after his arrival Millard joined the Society, and in 1893 was made assistant editor of the *Journal* though he had doubtless been helping Phipson with the work of the Society for some time previous.

In 1906 Phipson retired from business and Millard was elected to fill his place in the Society. He continued to give it of his best till he left India in 1920. Under the editorship of Phipson and Millard the *Journal* had become the most important scientific publication east of Suez. By the time Millard took over, other scientific journals had sprung up all over the East but the Society's journal remained unique since it not only published important scientific papers but also natural history articles of more general interest, suitable for the majority of members. It was at this time also that the Society began to publish in book form serial articles from its journal, and the first thus to appear was Major Wall's small guide to poisonous snakes which, before long, was in every dispensary from the Bolan Pass to the Chinese frontier. The greatest success in this line was the 'Duck Book' containing Stuart Baker's papers on 'Indian Ducks and their Allies' started as long ago as 1897. Millard took a great pride in this book, and when at home on leave personally saw to the printing and binding so that the volume would be a credit to the Society. He did not, however, realize what a demand there would be for the book and it was in no time out of print. To fill the place of the articles on ducks, Millard persuaded Stuart Baker to write a



Walter S. Millard



Ernest H. N. Lowther

new series on snipe, bustards, sandgrouse and other game birds which in due course were published in two volumes but were never as popular as the first venture. Though Millard took interest in natural history generally, his particular hobby was gardening especially the cultivation of flowering trees and shrubs. A tree, moreover, did not necessarily have to have a beautiful flower to interest him, and it was at his suggestion that Father Blatter wrote the articles on 'The Palms of India'. This was followed a few years later by a series on 'Beautiful Indian Trees' of which Millard and Blatter were the joint authors. For many years Millard had been collecting paintings of flowering trees from all over India and studying the best ways of propagating and growing them. The title of this series was slightly misleading since a number of the trees were not Indian but had been introduced either by Millard himself or by his friend H. V. Kemball of the Improvement Trust.

Among the trees introduced in Bombay by Millard the Burmese *Cassia renigera* is the most outstanding, and indeed it vies with *Amherstia nobilis* as the most beautiful flowering tree in the city. Other introductions include *Pterocarpus indicus* with yellow fragrant flowers, which in spite of its name is also a native of Burma, and *Glicicidia maculata* a delightful South American tree raised from seed sent from Ceylon which first flowered in Millard's garden in 1916.

After Millard married he lived in a bungalow in Winter Road, Malabar Hill, and about 1910 moved to another on 'The Ridge' with much more ground which was soon developed into a beautiful garden with trees and shrubs and a large fernery full of foliage plants, orchids and other tropical flowers. This was the most important private garden in Bombay, and guests staying at Government house were frequently sent to inspect its treasures. On several occasions different governors sought Millard's advice in regard to improving the grounds of Malabar Point, and at Lord Willingdon's request he undertook to supervise the laying out of the grounds at the Willingdon Club.

The study of birds has always been the most popular branch of natural history among members of the Society, but there had been little advance in the knowledge of mammals, other than the big game animals, since Blanford wrote his volume in 1888. R. C. Wroughton, after he retired from the Indian Forest Service took up the study of mammals at the British museum and was continually writing to Millard about this lamentable state of affairs and urging the Society to employ a collector to collect small mammals. Millard, however, could only point out that no collector was available in India and that the finances of the Society did not permit of employing one.

Then one morning in 1910 C. A. Crump suddenly walked into the office. He had just arrived from England and offered his services as a collector or taxidermist. Here was a chance not to be missed, and Millard hastily calling a committee meeting persuaded the members to agree to employ Crump for several months and at the same time to launch an appeal for a Mammal Survey Fund. This appeal was so successful that within a year four collectors were at work and the Mammal Survey firmly established. The collections

provided adequate material on which to base the two new volumes of the 'Fauna' by R. I. Pocock, as well as other important publications.

The starting and the success of the Mammal Survey was entirely due to Millard, and only those who were in close association with him at the time have any idea of the amount of time and work he spent in the raising of the money and organising of the survey. All this was done in addition to attending to the Society's other business and editing the *Journal*, to say nothing of looking after his own business of Messrs. Phipson & Co.

Millard's honorary work was not entirely confined to the offices he held in the Society. He was also Secretary of the Countess of Dufferin Fund and the Cama & Alless Hospital, and entirely responsible for the running of the Peachy-Phipson Sanatorium at Nasik. When Phipson left India Millard took his place on the Committee of the Prince of Wales Museum, but in spite of all his efforts the building was not completed till after the outbreak of the 1914 war, when it was turned into a hospital for Indian soldiers, and by the time he left India the building had not yet reverted to the original purpose for which it was built.

It is difficult in a few words to tell of all Millard's activities on behalf of the Society, how he pressed the Government to enquire into the inshore fisheries and indeed if it had not been for the first world war he would have taken up the whole question of the fishing industry in Bombay with the Government. Through his efforts a close time was established for certain birds, while other species were given additional protection. When he finally left Bombay he became the Society's representative in London and undertook the arrangements for the reproduction of plates, printing of books, etc.

Every visitor to the Society's room in Apollo Street will remember the great Indian Hornbill, better known as the 'office canary' which lived in a cage behind Millard's chair in Phipson & Co.'s office for 26 years and died in 1920. It is said its death was caused by swallowing a piece of wire, but in the past 'William' had swallowed a lighted cigar without ill effects and I for my part think that the loss of his old friend was the principal cause.

By nature Millard was of rather a shy and retiring disposition, but all that vanished when he had anything to do on behalf of the Society. He was a keen sportsman and loved a day after quail or snipe in the Thana district. While at home, on leave, he always spent part of August grouse shooting in Perthshire and after he retired he rented a shooting lodge in the Rannoch district for several years. After finally leaving India Millard settled in Tunbridge Wells, within easy reach of London, which enabled him to run up for the day to attend to business or visit the fortnightly shows of the Horticultural Society. Attached to his house was a small garden which he soon filled with interesting plants and shrubs, and it is doubtful if there was ever any garden of the same size with as many rare and interesting plants! It was a veritable *multum in parvo*.

Millard married Sybil daughter of James Mackinlay of Edinburgh, and seldom has there been a happier marriage. Mrs. Millard assisted her husband in many ways and her presence at the meetings of the Society was always welcome, where her charming personality made

the shy visitor feel at ease. Later when she became crippled with arthritis no husband could have attended his wife in a more unselfish way.

To Mrs. Millard, and her family Mrs. Kirk Green and Dr. Antony Millard, all members of the Society send their deepest sympathy.

And now before closing this inadequate notice I must add a personal note. It was through Millard that I had the chance of going to Bombay and working for the Society which had great influences on my later career. It is difficult to describe the man himself, but we who worked under him in the old days, whether in the Society or Phipson & Co., Sir Reginald Spence, P. M. D. Sanderson and S. H. Prater all received innumerable kindnesses from him which cannot be told here. We all loved and admired him and now that he is gone we treasure the memory of his friendship.

NORMAN B. KINNEAR

E. H. N. LOWTHER

(Plate)

Ernest Herbert Newton Lowther, universally known to his friends and intimates as Bob Lowther, died suddenly on April 28th at his home at Burgess Hill in Sussex. He was born in India, being educated first in Simla and later in England at Bedford and Tonbridge schools. It was at the latter that his great love of nature first became evident and there, too, he was weaned by the great naturalist and photographer, Richard Kearton, from that usual boyhood pastime of egg-collecting to replace in its stead a passion for bird-photography. In 1911, after his return to India, where he followed in his father's footsteps in the service of the East Indian Railway, he took up with enthusiasm the photography of India's birds, an enthusiasm which later became a ruling force in his life, resulting in the fine work which for several years graced the pages of the *Journal* as well as the walls at a number of Exhibitions, and culminated in the publication of 'A Bird Photographer in India' and, in conjunction with the writer of this notice, of 'The Breeding Birds of Kashmir'. On his retirement from the railway in 1945 he had risen to be Divisional Superintendent at Lucknow, but it was while stationed at Allahabad and earlier in the Dhanbad area that he did much of what is probably his best work, making the most of his opportunities to photograph the birds of those districts made famous by Allan Octavian Hume. Bob Lowther had a great capacity for making friends and all who met him at once came under his spell. He was kindness and generosity personified and had a delightful sense of humour which was quite infectious. A story which he used to tell almost against himself was how the chairman at one of his nature lectures in India—who in fact was his chief—humorously introduced him to his audience with the words, 'I believe Mr. Lowther in his spare time is a railwayman'. Although he retired from India with impaired health after 34 years' service, his